

## People We Won't See in Heaven - 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 – November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014

- I've titled Today's teaching, "People We Won't See in Heaven."
- It's been said when we get to heaven we'll have three responses the first of which is "I'm here" and the second of which is, "they're here?"
- The third response is, "where are they?" In other words, those who we thought would be in heaven are not, and those we didn't think are.

- Be that as it may, what we're about to see in our text today, is a list of people, though not exhaustive, we shouldn't expect to see in heaven.
- Once again, I need to preface today's teaching with a warning of sorts as it relates to the delicate and mature subject matter in the text.
- Namely, that of the Apostle Paul dealing with the issue of unrepentant sexual immorality as well as homosexuality within the body of Christ.

- It is absolutely vital we understand that Paul is not talking about those who struggle with or have fallen into the sins he lists here in the text.
- This because of verse eleven where Paul says of the Corinthians such "were" some of you. Notice he doesn't say such "are" some of you.
- The point being is some had come out of the lifestyle they "were" in, past tense, which means they "are" not in that lifestyle, present tense.

- The reason I point this out is because we would err greatly to think anyone who's fallen into sexual sin will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- Rather, those who will not inherit the kingdom of God are the ones who brazenly and defiantly continue in those sins and are unrepentant.
- Again, I don't think this can be overstated, such that, this only applies to people who are not born again and have not been regenerated.

### **1. Sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, and the LGBT community (Verse 9)**

9 Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men

- v9 Paul says, do not be deceived; the sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, and the LGBT community will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- This is the third of six "don't you know" questions that Paul rhetorically asks them, but here, he adds to this also saying do not be deceived.
- This begs the question of why? Why would Paul emphasize this and warn them about being deceived prior to listing these sins specifically.

- I'm of the belief that the reason is because of the deception amongst those in these sins to think that in the end everyone will go to heaven.
- I can't tell you how hard it is as a pastor to do a memorial service for someone who had never come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- Especially when friends and family who also have never come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ say, "oh, they are in a better place."

- Sadly, this is the deception that everyone goes to a better place, and no one ever goes to hell. A loving God wouldn't send people there.
- Actually, these are false teachings known as universalism and annihilationism, both of which are absolutely unbiblical, yet taught by some.
- Annihilationism is the belief that apart from salvation, the final punishment of human beings results in annihilation rather than eternal hell.

- Universalism is the religious belief in universal human quality in which everyone universally will go to heaven regardless of how they lived.
- It's for this reason many are deceived into thinking that whether or not one is a Christian, Buddhist, or Muslim, we all go the same place.
- Perhaps we need look no further as to why it is that people will always have nothing but good things to say about someone after they die.

It reminds me of the humorous story that's told of two evil brothers. They were rich, and used their money to keep their evil ways from the public eye. They even attended the same church, and appeared to be perfect Christians. Then, their pastor retired, and a new one was hired. Not only could the new pastor see right through the brothers' deception, but he also spoke well and true, and the church membership grew in numbers. A fund-raising campaign was started to build a new assembly. All of a sudden, one of the brothers died. The remaining brother sought out the new pastor the day before the funeral and handed him a check for the amount needed to finish paying for the new building. "I have only one condition," he said. "At the funeral, you must say my brother was a saint." The pastor gave his word, and deposited the check. The next day, at the funeral, the pastor did not hold back. "He was an evil man," he said. "He cheated on his wife and abused his family." After going on like this, he finally concluded, "But, compared to his brother, he was a SAINT."

### **2. Thieves, the greedy, drunkards, slanderers and swindlers (Verse 10)**

10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

- v10 Paul continues his list of those not inheriting the kingdom of God adding thieves, the greedy, drunkards, slanderers, and the swindlers.
- To me, this is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that drunkards, slanderers and swindlers are included in the list.
- In other words, they like the other more obvious ones rise to the level of having the propensity to condemn someone to eternal damnation.

- I find this interesting because Christians are prone to think being a greedy swindler, or antagonistic slanderer, isn't as sinful as other sins.
- The problem with this is our passage here First Corinthians says they're just as bad as sins of sexual immorality and even homosexuality.
- Again, let me hasten to say that this is not speaking of those who struggle with or fail in these areas, rather it's those who continue in them.

### **3. Those who are not cleansed, sanctified and justified (Verse 11)**

11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

- v11 He says that's what some of them were but they're washed sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of God.
- What Paul is saying is there's hope for those who are caught up in these sins, and as such, they can be washed, sanctified, and justified.
- This is the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, and the subsequent indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to live a holy and sanctified life.

I'll bring it to a close with what one commentator wrote because I think it sums everything up perfectly, "... this is the only place in 1-2 Corinthians where Paul uses this verb with its full theological meaning [of "you were justified"] though he uses it often in Romans and Galatians. The meaning is that of being acquitted or declared innocent by God, and so placed in a right relationship with him. ...you have entered into a new relationship with God. ...An alternative translation model for the whole verse is: Some of you were like that. But the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our God have cleansed you from sin, dedicated you to God, and put you right with God."